



NEWS RELEASE

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DEFENDANT IN SOCIAL SECURITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT FRAUD CASE SENTENCED

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen announced that on June 26, 2008, Hector Hugo Valerio Huerta, a resident of Anchorage, Alaska, was sentenced in federal court in Anchorage to six months of community confinement and five years of probation for his conviction of four counts of social security fraud. Huerta was also ordered to pay the State of Alaska \$2,232.00 in restitution, as well as \$400.00 to the federal court in special assessments.

United States District Court Judge Timothy M. Burgess imposed sentence on Huerta, age 66.

According to information presented to the court by Assistant United States Attorney Crandon Randell, Huerta (a.k.a. Hector Hugo Valerio, Ugo Hector Valeri, Hector Hugo Valeri, and Hugo Huerta) engaged in Social Security fraud by applying for State of Alaska unemployment benefits, while, at the same time, holding down a full-time job. The scheme was based upon Huerta's use of multiple Social Security numbers. He worked using one Social Security number while collecting unemployment benefits using a different Social Security number. The scheme allowed Huerta to collect \$2,232 from the State of Alaska before it was discovered that he was depositing employment checks and unemployment checks at the same time at the same bank branch. The investigation revealed that Huerta, since 1971, obtained at least four Social Security numbers, with three numbers being obtained in the space of eight months.

Prior to imposing sentence, Judge Burgess stated that the sentence had to be sufficient to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to deter similar criminal conduct by others, and to protect the public from further crimes of the defendant.

Mr. Cohen commended Judy Harris of the Office of the Inspector General of the Social Security Administration, and Investigator Sue Nichols of the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development for the investigation leading to the successful prosecution of Huerta.

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